

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 QUITO 08092 301542Z

ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 OES-07 HA-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05

H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 DLOS-09 EB-08 CG-00 DOTE-00

/090 W

-----009719 301548Z /44

P 301530Z NOV 77

FM AMEMBASSY QUITO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6495

INFO AMEMBASSY LA PAZ

AMEMBASSY LIMA

AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

AMCONSUL GUAYAQUIL

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EFIS PBOR EC PE

SUBJ: ECUADOREAN REACTION TO FISHING BOAT INCIDENT RESULTING IN  
DEATH OF ECUADOREAN FISHERMAN

REF: GUAYAQUIL 2019 (NOTAL)

1. ECUADOREAN RESPONSE TO NOVEMBER 24 SHOOTING OF AN ECUADOREAN FISHERMAN BY A PERUVIAN PATROL BOAT HAS BEEN CAREFUL AND LOW-KEY. FIRST NEWSPAPER REPORTS OF THE INCIDENT DID NOT APPEAR UNTIL NOVEMBER 27, WITH PAGE 1 ARTICLES IN QUITO'S EL COMERCIO AND EL TIEMPO REPEATING A GOE COMMUNIQUE. THE COMMUNIQUE DESCRIBED THE INCIDENT IN TERMS SIMILAR TO THOSE IN REFTTEL, ADDING THAT THE GOE HAD DECIDED TO KEEP THE SITUATION QUIET AWAITING EXPLANATION FROM PERU. SURPRISINGLY, THE GUAYAQUIL PAPER PLAYED THE EVENT EVEN MORE CAREFULLY--EL UNIVERSO PRINTED THE COMMUNIQUE ON PAGE 13.

2. ON NOVEMBER 28 EL COMERCIO REPORTED THAT THE GOE HAD  
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PROTESTED THE INCIDENT AND QUOTED FONMIN JOSE AYALA TO THE EFFECT THAT A MORE DETAILED STATEMENT WOULD BE RELEASED TO THE PRESS THE SAME DAY. NOVEMBER 29 PAPERS CARRIED A NEW GOE COMMUNIQUE WHICH SIMPLY REPORTED THAT THE PERUVIAN AMBASSADOR HAD BEEN CITED ON THE 24TH AND HAD COME TO AYALA'S OFFICE ON THE 25TH WHERE HE WAS GIVEN A NOTE WHICH PROTESTED THE INCIDENT AND DEMANDED

AN APOLOGY, A COMPLETE INVESTIGATION, AND ASSURANCES THAT MEASURES WOULD BE TAKEN TO AVOID A SIMILAR INCIDENT. THE COMMUNIQUE ADDED THAT FOREIGN MINISTRY WOULD CONTINUE TO ACT IN DEFENSE OF ECUADOREAN SOVEREIGNTY, AND THAT THE GOE WAS TAKING NECESSARY STEPS TO INCREASE CONTROL AND VIGILANCE OVER TERRITORIAL WATERS.

3. COMMENT: THE GOE IS NOT GOING TO LET WHAT IT OBVIOUSLY CONSIDERS AN ISOLATED INCIDENT GET OUT OF HAND AND ADVERSELY AFFECT ITS IMPROVED BILATERAL RELATIONS WITH PERU. ASSUMING, OF COURSE, THAT THE GOE ACCEPTS RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE INCIDENT AND ISSUES SOME KIND OF APOLOGY AND EXPLANATION. IN FACT, THE INCIDENT COULD HAVE THE BENEFICIAL SIDE EFFECT OF GETTING THE TWO GOVERNMENTS TO DISCUSS SERIOUSLY THEIR MUTUAL COASTAL FISHING PROBLEMS.

4. THIS INCIDENT IS ALSO AN ILLUMINATING EXAMPLE OF THE KIND OF COOPERATION THE GOE CAN COUNT ON FROM THE LOCAL PRESS IN MANAGING THE NEWS. WHAT COULD HAVE BEEN PLAYED HEAVILY TO APPEAL TO ECUADOREAN CHAUVINISM HAS INSTEAD BEEN HANDLED WITH GREAT CIRCUMSPECTION. FOR INSTANCE, THE NOVEMBER 28 EL TIEMPO ARTICLE NOTED THAT VARIOUS POLITICAL PARTIES HAD CONDEMNED THE INCIDENT. IT MENTIONED BY NAME, HOWEVER, ONLY EX-PRESIDENT OTTO AROSEMENA'S MINISCULE DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONALIST LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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COALITION (CID). THERE HAVE BEEN NO OTHER REFERENCES TO POLITICAL PARTY COMMENT AT ALL.

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NNN

## Message Attributes

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**Disposition Event:**  
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**Review Markings:**  
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